

Remarks

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's entry of the Amendment filed on September 22, 2003.

In the present Final Office Action, claims 1, 3, and 6-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Kume et al (U.S. 5,111,107). Claims 1, 2 and 6-13 are also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Ragland, Jr. (U.S. 5,932,957).

Claim 1 as amended is patentably distinct from both Ragland, Jr. and Kume et al since neither reference teaches nor suggests a detensioning member fixed along one of the outer or inner peripheral surfaces (i.e., the inside and outside surfaces around the continuous rectangular frame) of at least one of said sides. As clearly shown in Figures 2 and 3 of Ragland, Jr., the detensioning member 60 is fixed between opposite sides 62, 64 of the support frame. As clearly shown in Figure 1 of Kume et al. and described at col. 2, beginning at line 58, detensioning members 9 are attached to the reverse surfaces 11 which are opposite to the side where the grid elements are attached to the resilient support members 3, 4. This difference is significant, because the sides with detensioning members attached to peripheral surfaces will flex or bow in the plane of the frame, reducing the distance between the attachment points and consequently the tension in the mask, while the positions of the mask relative to the screen and the frame relative to the mounting means for the frame are not significantly affected. In both Ragland, Jr. and Kume et al, in sharp contrast, the portions of the frame joined to the tension mask are pivoted about a point along the offset or U-shaped sides of the frame, whereby both the positions of the mask relative to the screen and the frame relative to the mounting means for the frame are significantly affected.

Claim 1 as amended is further patentably distinct from both Ragland, Jr. and Kume et al since neither reference teaches nor suggests a tension mask being supported between a pair of support blade members wherein the support blade members are each attached to the frame

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at an attachment point along opposing sides. The Office Action argues that both Kume (figure 2, element 5a) and Ragland (figure 3, element 52) disclose support blade members joined to the mask frame for supporting the tension mask. However, the feature of the support blades being attached to the frame *at an attachment point* along opposite sides is significant, because a point attachment allows the mask support frame to maintain consistent tension in the mask while the sides are bowed by a detensioning member fixed along one of the peripheral surfaces of at least one of said sides.

Claim 6 is further patentably distinct from both Ragland, Jr. and Kume et al since neither reference teaches nor suggests said opposing long and short sides lie in a frame plane. To the contrary, both Ragland, Jr. and Kume et al rely upon the offset U-shape of the resilient sides to change the tension on the tension mask, as the bowing in both references is essentially orthogonal to the tension mask.

Claim 9 includes the feature pointed out above with respect to claim 1, that is neither disclosed or suggested by Kume et al or ragland, Jr., namely detensioning members fixed along the peripheral surfaces of said sides.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 4 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ragland, Jr. (U.S. 5,932,957) in view of Kume (U.S. 5,111,107).

Claims 4 and 5 include the feature pointed out above with respect to claim 1 that is neither disclosed or suggested by Kume et al or ragland, Jr., namely detensioning members fixed along the peripheral surfaces of said sides.

Also, as pointed out in response to the previous Office Action, a prima facie case of obviousness has not been made. Obviousness cannot be established by combining the teachings of the prior art to produced the claimed invention, absent some teaching, suggestion or incentive supporting the combination. The mere fact that the prior art may be modified in

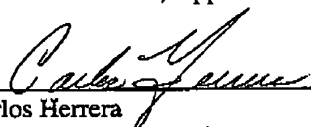
the manner suggested by the Examiner does not make the modification obvious unless the prior art suggested the desirability of the modification. None of the three references cited suggest combining the features of a rectangular support frame having each of the sides connected to form a continuously generally planar frame with detensioning members fixed along the peripheral surfaces of the sides and having a different coefficient of thermal expansion from that of the frame.

Fendley et al teaches away from the present invention, providing a support frame having a reinforcing material in order to prevent undesired inward flexure of the shadow mask support structure. As Fendley et al teach in paragraph 5, line 35, a mechanically rigid structure is mandatory. Such a mechanically rigid structure, if applied to the teachings of Ragland, Jr. and Kume et al would render them unfit for their intended purpose of allowing flexure in the frame in order to detension the mask.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections is therefore respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that, in view of the amendments and arguments presented above, this application is in condition for allowance. Entry of the amendments, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-13, and issuance of Letters Patent for this invention are therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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